

## Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FEA-01 /102 W  
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R 181625Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1281

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL CURACAO

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 13171

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: ENRG VE

SUBJ: VENEZUELAN INTEREST IN EXXON'S ARUBA REFINERY

REF: CURACAO 668

1. ROBERT DOLPH, PRESIDENT OF EXXON'S VENEZUELAN SUBSIDIARY (CREOLE), ASKED ME DURING A CONVERSATION ON DEC 16 IF I HAD HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT A RECENT VISIT TO CARACAS BY BETICO CROES, THE ARUBAN POLITICAL LEADER. IN RESPONSE TO MY PROFESSION OF IGNORANCE DOLPH SAID HE UNDERSTOOD CROES HAD COME HERE TO TALK TO GOV PETROLEUM AUTHORITIES ABOUT THE FUTURE OF EXXON'S REFINERY ON ARUBA. ACCORDING TO DOLPH'S STORY, CROES HAD ON RETURN TO THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES BOASTED OPENLY THAT HE HAD REACHED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE WITH THE VENEZUELAN ON A PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT. THE GOV WOULD GET A ONE-THIRD PARTICIPATION IN THE REFINERY AND THE LOCAL GOVT(PRESUMABLY AN INDEPENDENT ARUBA) ONE-THIRD, WHILE EXXON RETAINED THE REMAINING THIRD. DOLPH ASSERTED THAT CROES' MISSION AND ITS AFTERMATH FIGURED IN THE DECISION OF EVERTSZ TO BREAK UP THE GOVERNING COALITION (REF).

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2. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO INFO TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS

TALE BUT NOTE THAT A VENEZUELAN INTEREST IN SUCH A SCHEME WOULD NOT BE ENTIRELY FAR-FETCHED. IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT HOME AGAIN TO THE GOV DURING THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS OVER OIL PRICES THAT EXXON CAN OPERATE THE ARUBA REFINERY WITHOUT VENEZUELAN CRUDE. THERE HAS BEEN TALK HERE FOR SOME MONTHS OF HOW DESIRABLE GOV EQUITY POSITIONS IN THE BIG OFF-SHORE REFINERIES IN THE NA WOULD BE AS A MEANS OF ENSURING OUTLETS FOR CRUDE AND PROTECTING MARKET SHARE IN THE US. EXXON HAS MADE CLEAR IN THE PAST TO THE GOV ITS TOTAL LACK OF INTEREST IN EVEN DISCUSSING SUCH A PARTICIPATION. BUT AN INDEPENDENT ARUBA MIGHT BE ABLE TO FORCE A CHANGE IN THAT POSITION.

SHLAUDEMAM

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Control Number:** n/a  
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